REMARKS

The Office Action mailed August 25, 2009 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as amended, in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested. Claims 1-11 are pending and stand rejected. Claims 1, 6 and 7 are independent claims. Claims 1, 6 and 7 have been amended.

Claims 1, 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps. The omitted steps are: saving or storing (in at least temporary memory) the "sequence of still pictures" taken by the camera. In response claim 1, has been amended to recite "the camera takes a sequence of still pictures, *which are temporarily stored in a cache*; a next one of the pictures, *from the cache,* in the sequence..." Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the above amendments have overcome the rejection.

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fisher (USP no. 7,133,068) in view of Tanaka (USP no. 6,233,004) in further view of Hofer (US Pub. No. 2004/0189849).

Claim 1 recites the limitation of "the camera takes a sequence of still pictures, which are temporarily stored in a cache; a next one of the pictures, from the cache, in the sequence is selected for being stored in the memory based on an amount of overlap regarding a picture content with a previous one of the pictures stored in the memory..." Applicants can find nothing in Fisher, Tanaka or Hofer that teaches these limitations.

As previously noted, Fisher teaches that all of the still pictures of the video image that are to be extracted have already been saved in the memory of the camera. Thus, they are cached and then stored. Fisher must teach that all the pictures are saved because if the device of Fisher were to limit the pictures being stored based on an amount of overlap of pictures, then the playback of the video image would not be consistent with the video image that was captured.

Moreover, conventional stitching algorithms, known in the field of image processing, create a composite picture from the series of overlapping pictures available from memory and not cached digital data, as the present invention.

Still further, conventional digital cameras convert an optical image of an object into digital data and comprise a solid-state image-sensing element, such as a charge-coupled device (CCD). In case a CCD is used, the sensor includes an analog-to-digital converter to convert the CCD's analog output signals to digital data. The sensor is connected to cache that stores the digital data from the sensor. When the user depresses the camera's shutter button, the processor controls the CCD so as to perform a, so-called, all-pixel readout, wherein the data is temporarily stored in the cache. From there, the data is transferred to the memory. Memory comprises, e.g., a removable memory card or a hard-disk drive (HDD) with a small form-factor, etc. A display lets the user view the image as captured by the sensor, e.g., while focusing or finding the proper object, as well as an image stored in the memory. See Page 4, lines 15-16 of the specification.

Accordingly, Fisher fails to teach the claim element of "a next one of the pictures, *from the cache*, in the sequence is selected for being stored in the memory based on an amount of overlap regarding a picture content with a previous one of the pictures stored in the memory," as is recited in the claims.

Further, Fisher further discloses in Figure 8 the process wherein an initial still frame is captured (step 826) and then at a predetermined time interval, based on a scanning speed, the scanning manager may create a new current still frame from the captured video data (step 828). In step 832, an overlap region between the foregoing still frame and an immediately preceding still frame. (see col. 8, lines 26-40) is processed.

Accordingly, Fisher further fails to disclose selecting a next picture to be stored based on a desired amount of overlap. Rather Fisher discloses system that extracts pictures from stored pictures at a predetermined time, which is based on a scan speed.

The scan speed may be selected to achieve an overlap between adjacent pictures. But there is no criteria regarding the overlap. Only that one should exist.

Tanaka discloses an image processing apparatus that detects corresponding pixels in object images captured from a plurality of viewpoints and interpolates object images that are supposed to be seen from viewpoints other than the plurality of viewpoints on the basis of the detected corresponding pixels. Figure 2 illustrates a plurality of image capturing devices 22 providing images of object 21 from different viewpoints. Tanaka further discloses different embodiments of the invention wherein pixel values are interpolated based on the input pixel values (see col. 8, lines 63-67, first embodiment determines average value of input pixels; second embodiment determines an average of neighboring input pixel values).

Tanaka teaches that it is possible to generate a great number of interpolations images between the input images taken from the photo-taking viewpoints at the fine intervals so as to fill the gap between them. (see col. 17, line 66-col. 18, line 2).

However, the gap referred to by Tanaka represents a gap in the viewing angles and not adjacent (or in the case of Tanaka the same) still picture. The Office Action disagrees.

Applicants further note that Tanaka teaches that "since a viewpoint of the viewer is detected as well as a new image corresponding to the viewpoint is generated by using the interpolation image generated by the image interpolation means, it is possible to generate an image at an arbitrary position designated by the viewer's view point" see col. 18, lines 17-22. Thus, applicants again respectfully submit that the gap referred to by Tanaka represents a gap in the viewing angles and not adjacent (or in the case of Tanaka the same) still picture.

Therefore, even if the teachings of Tanaka could be combined with that of Fisher, the combination would not disclose claim element of "interpolating pixel data from edges

of said area of said composite picture lacking coverage," as is recited in the claims. Nor does the combination of Fisher and Tanaka disclose the element of providing direction to the camera.

The addition of Hofer fails to cure the infirmities of Fisher and Tanaka.

A claimed invention is prima facie obvious when three basic criteria are met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the reference themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the teachings therein. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. And, third, the prior art reference or combined references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations

In this case, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been met, as the combination of the cited references fails to disclose a material element recited in the claims.

Applicant submits that, for the amendments made to the claims and for the remarks made herein, the rejection of each of the independent claims has been overcome and respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

With regard to the remaining claims, each of these claims depends from one of the independent claims, and, hence, is also not unpatentable over Fisher, Tanaka and Hofer by virtue of its dependency upon an allowable base claim.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims are in allowable form and the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant denies any statement, position or averment stated in the Office Action that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing. Any rejection and/or point of argument not addressed are moot in view of the presented arguments and no arguments

are waived and none of the statements and/or assertions made in the Office Action is conceded.

Applicant makes no statement regarding the patentability of the subject matter recited in the claims prior to this Amendment and has elected to amend the claims solely to expedite the prosecution of this matter. Applicant expressly reserves the right to re-prosecute the subject matter recited in the clams prior to this Amendment in one or more continuing application during the pendency of the instant application.

Respectfully submitted,

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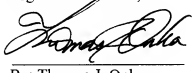

Date: November 15, 2009

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